

PUEBLO COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

ANNEX C - WINTER STORMS

I. PURPOSE

- A. To provide winter storm warnings, coordinated emergency response and to reduce potential loss of life within the community.
- B. Endeavor to maintain essential services during a major winter storm.
- C. Identify duties and responsibilities of each department involved, and document procedures.
- D. Plan / provide for a coordinated response by all necessary departments / agencies.

II. SITUATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- A. Pueblo is vulnerable to major winter storms.
- B. Large-scale loss of life and property does not normally occur as a result of a winter storm. However, any person caught out in the storm is in extreme danger. Isolated farms and individual residences are also threatened. Occasionally there are power outages, resulting in a lack of communication, and the failure of heating sources. Medical assistance may become critical.
- C. Community response will differ in accordance with communication capabilities and the availability of snow/ice removal resources.
- D. Livestock losses will vary depending upon shelter and availability of feed.
- E. Winter storms will fluctuate in size and intensity, and may affect only part of a community, the entire county, or the region.
- F. Citizens and authorities will be advised of severe winter weather conditions through a variety of means; e.g., National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) all-hazards weather radio, and standard radio and TV bulletins.
- G. Transportation by road or air will become more hazardous because of snow, ice and limited visibility.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

This community should be aware of severe winter weather that may affect the area. A **winter storm watch** means that severe winter weather is possible. A **winter storm warning** means that heavy snow, sleet or freezing rain is expected. This information will be passed to appropriate response agencies i.e., law enforcement, fire districts, medical services, search and rescue organizations, American Red Cross, school districts, etc.

Depending upon the situation, this plan will be implemented in three phases:

A. Phase I - Readiness

Normally, the initial threat information will originate with the National Weather Service (NWS) in the form of watches and warnings;

Emergency response agencies are alerted of an impending winter storm. These agencies will utilize this time to alert and locate personnel needed for the emergency. Required snow/ice removal and control equipment and materials will be located for use.

B. Phase II - Emergency

Upon receiving information of a winter storm occurring within the community, the Pueblo Communication Centers will immediately notify the Department of Emergency Management, the City of Pueblo Department of Public Works and Pueblo County Public Works Department. The Department of Emergency Management will activate the Pueblo EOC if necessary, and notify the elected officials. The City of Pueblo Department of Public Works and Pueblo County Public Works Department will determine how much of their snow removal plans will be activated. Should a life-threatening situation arise, search and rescue teams and snow removal crews will work to reach stranded individuals. Emergency shelter locations may be activated.

C. Phase III - Recovery

All agencies will take appropriate action to sustain life and property. Search and rescue operations will continue as needed, and every effort will be made to restore public facilities to normal operating conditions as soon as possible.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Public Works Departments, Transportation Departments, and Metropolitan Districts may:
1. Provide snow removal, plowing, barricading, ice removal, bridge clearing, etc., or any other function concerned with road or street clearance during winter storms as manpower, equipment and materials may be available;
 2. Plow and sand main arteries according to a plan of priorities. These plans may include opening a minimum network of streets to provide a transportation system for emergency vehicles; and
 3. During severe snow or blowing snow, or other conditions that could endanger Public Works personnel, all plowing and sanding may be suspended at the discretion of the Public Work's Directors. The elected officials shall be included in the decision to suspend operations, and the Department of Emergency Management and the Joint Information Center shall be informed in order to notify the public and supporting agencies.
- B. Law Enforcement shall:
1. Assist in the evacuation of stranded motorists/population;
 2. Establish roadblocks and maintain traffic control;
 3. Preserve law and order;
 4. Establish a field command post, if required. (To optimize communications and provide support to key field operations).
 5. Coordinate search and rescue operations; and
 6. Coordinate aviation support (supply drops);
- C. Fire Departments will maintain a state of readiness for providing fire protection, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, search and rescue and general emergency services.

- D. Department of Emergency Management (DEM) will:
1. Upon receipt of notification that a severe winter storm may occur in the community, elected officials will be contacted and the EOC activated, if deemed necessary;
 2. Determine resources needed for affected area, and coordinate response activities;
 3. Establish communications with the Colorado Division of Emergency Management (CDEM); and
 4. Notify American Red Cross that a winter storm may occur and shelters may be necessary for stranded motorists, power outage victims, etc.
- E. Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES):
1. Amateur radio operator will establish communications at the NWS during a NWS call up for severe weather situations;
 2. Respond to the EOC, once it is activated; and
 3. Radio operators will assist with and provide backup for overall communications, as well as health and well-being messages.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

Document all actions so that records can be compiled for financial and historical data.

VI. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The primary responsibility for development and maintenance of this annex is that of the DEM with support from responding agencies. The annex will be reviewed and revised accordingly at least annually, unless significant changes warrant earlier revision.

VII. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES

Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 206.227